



## PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

### WHAT IS THE PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM?

- The health of America's communities hinges on the Nation's public health workforce - 500,000 physicians, nurses, environmental healthscientists, healtheducators, laboratorians, managers, and other professionals who practice on the front lines of public health.
- Front line staff in public health need a broad array of skills to ensure progress in achieving national health objectives (e.g., Healthy People 2010) and in eliminating health disparities.
- An estimated 80% of all public health workers are not fully prepared to address the health needs of America's communities including new threats to homeland security.

### WHAT HAS CDC ACCOMPLISHED?

In collaboration with a broad array of partners, CDC developed a strategic plan for public health workforce development and a complimentary implementation plan over the past two years. The plan outlines strategies for identifying needed competencies, developing model curriculum, designing an integrated distance learning system, providing incentives for learning and conducting evaluation and research. It builds on over a decade of successful collaborations focused on building a life-long learning system for public health. The Public Health Training Network (PHTN) annually reaches over 400,000 learners nationally; the National Laboratory Training Network reaches more than 7,000 laboratorians in public and private labs; hundreds of public health leaders benefit from national programs (Public Health Leadership Institute) and regional institutes which now cover 46 states (National PH Leadership Development Network) and a model program for state-based teams (Management Academy for Public Health)

*Example of program in action:* Consensus core competencies for public health practice are in place as well as competencies for emergency preparedness, leadership development and informatics; a *Competencies to Curriculum* toolkit is available for course development. A national network of Centers for Public Health Preparedness was funded to focus on bioterrorism preparedness training and to complement existing training infrastructure. Over 2 million public health and health care providers were reached through national training activities sponsored by CDC and partners in response to the recent terrorist attacks and anthrax outbreaks.

### WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

- Strengthen and expand the national Centers for Public Health Preparedness Program;
- Implement a collaborative national training plan for bioterrorism and emergency preparedness with academic and practice community partners;
- Disseminate "Bioterrorism/Emergency Preparedness" modules to local health departments;
- Develop targeted preparedness training for public health leaders, nurses and informaticians; and
- Establish Regional Medicine-Public Health Education Centers for clinicians in collaboration with Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC).

For information about this or other CDC programs, visit [www.cdc.gov/programs](http://www.cdc.gov/programs).

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